

In The Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Sub 1
1. (Amended) A method for protecting plants shortly before or after the harvest from microbial attack, comprising the [distribution or application of] step of applying an antimicrobial composition to the surface of the plants, said antimicrobial composition [containing] comprising:

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[(ii)] (i) at least one lipophilic GRAS (generally recognized as safe) flavoring agent; and

(ii) at least one hydrophilic GRAS flavoring agent.

2. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said lipophilic GRAS flavoring agents are selected from the group consisting of (a₁) lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols or their derivatives, (b) polyphenol compounds, (c) lipophilic GRAS flavor acids or their derivatives, (d) phenols or their derivatives, (e) lipophilic esters, (f) terpenes, (g) acetals, (h) lipophilic aldehydes and (i) essential oils.
3. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 [or 2], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises at least two lipophilic GRAS flavoring agents[, preferably two lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols (a₁)].

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4. (Amended) The method according to claim 2 [or 3], wherein said lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols are selected from[:] the group consisting of aromatic GRAS flavor alcohols, including benzyl alcohol, 2-phenylethanol, 1-phenylethanol, cinnamyl alcohol, hydrocinnamyl alcohol, 1-phenyl-1-propanol and anisalcohol, and aliphatic GRAS flavor alcohols, including n-butyl alcohol, iso-butyl alcohol, hexyl alcohol, L-menthol, octyl alcohol, heptyl alcohol, n-amyl alcohol, iso-amyl alcohol, anisalcohol, citronellol, n-decyl alcohol, geraniol, β , γ -hexenol, lauryl alcohol, linalool, nerolidol, nonadienol, nonyl alcohol, rhodinol, terpineol, borneol, clineol, anisole, cuminyl alcohol, 10-undecene-1-ol and 1-hexadecanol and their derivatives[, said aromatic GRAS flavor alcohols, especially benzyl alcohol, being preferred].
5. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of claims 1 to 4] claim 2, wherein said hydrophilic GRAS flavoring agent is selected from the group consisting of a hydrophilic alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent [(a_h) or] and a hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent, wherein said [hydrophilic alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent (a_h) is preferably a monohydric or polyhydric alcohol having from 2 to 10, more preferably from 2 to 7, carbon atoms, especially one selected from acetoin, ethyl alcohol, propyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, propylene glycol and glycerol, and said] hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent is a hydrophilic organic GRAS flavor acid [(c_h)] having from 1 to

15 carbon atoms or a physiological salt thereof, a hydrophilic acetate [(e_h)] or a hydrophilic aldehyde [(h_h)].

6. (Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein said hydrophilic organic acid [(c_h)] has from 2 to 10 carbon atoms[, especially being selected from acetic acid, aconitic acid, formic acid, malic acid, lactic acid, phenylacetic acid, citric acid, mandelic acid, tartaric acid, fumaric acid, tannic acid, hydrocinnamic acid and their physiological salts;] said hydrophilic acetate [(e_h)] is selected from the group consisting of allcin, triacetin, potassium acetate, sodium acetate and calcium acetate; and[/or] said hydrophilic aldehyde [(h_h)] is selected from the group consisting of furfural, propionaldehyde and vanillin.
7. (Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises less than 50% by weight[, preferably less than 30% by weight, more preferably less than 20% by weight,] of benzyl alcohol or of a mixture of benzyl alcohol with ethanol and/or isopropanol.
8. (Amended) The method according to claim 5 [or 6], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises two lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols [(a_i)], but no benzyl alcohol and no polyphenol compounds [(b)].

9. (Amended) The method according to claim 5 [or 6], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises benzyl alcohol and/or a polyphenol compound [(b)], but no further GRAS flavor alcohols.
10. (Amended) The method according to claim 8 [or 9], wherein said antimicrobial composition [exclusively contains non-alcoholic hydrophilic GRAS flavoring agents, especially exclusively] consists of a hydrophilic GRAS flavor acid [(c_h)].
11. (Amended) The method according to claim 9 [or 10], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises from 0.01 to 99% by weight[, preferably from 0.1 to 90% by weight,] of benzyl alcohol or polyphenol compounds [(b)] and from 0.01 to 50% by weight[, preferably from 0.1 to 30% by weight,] of hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agents.
12. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 [or 2], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:
- (A) at least one [or more] GRAS flavor alcohol[s] (a) and/or [their] its derivatives; and
- (B) at least one [or more] flavoring agent[s] selected from the group consisting of polyphenol compounds (b) and lipophilic GRAS flavor acids or their derivatives (c).

13. (Amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:
- from 0.1 to 99% by weight[, preferably from 0.5 to 99% by weight,] of component (a),
- from 0 to 25% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 10% by weight,] of component (b), and
- from 0 to 70% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 30% by weight,] of component (c).
14. (Amended) The method according to claim 12 [or 13], wherein said antimicrobial composition contains further GRAS flavoring agents selected from (d) phenols or their derivatives, (e,) lipophilic esters,(f) terpenes, (g) acetals, (h,) lipophilic aldehydes and (i) essential oils.
15. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 12 [to 14], wherein component (A) of said antimicrobial composition [contains] is benzyl alcohol [as a necessary component (a1) and optionally one or more further lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols or their derivatives (a₁)].
16. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 12 to 15] 13, wherein said polyphenol compound [(b)] is selected from the group consisting of:

catechol, resorcinol, hydroquinone, phloroglucinol, pyrogallol, cyclohexane, resveratrol, usnic acid, acylpolyphenols, lignins, anthocyanins, flavones, catechols, gallic acid derivatives, caffeic acid, flavonoids, derivatives of the mentioned polyphenols, and extracts from Camellia, Primula; and said lipophilic GRAS acid [(c)] is selected from the group consisting of:

adipic acid, capronic acid, pelargonic acid, phenoxyacetic acid, valeric acid, iso-valeric acid, cinnamic acid, mandelic acid and their derivatives.

17. (Amended) The method according to claim [15 or 16] 12, wherein the component A of said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:

from 0.1 to 99% by weight[, preferably from 0.1 to 75% by weight,] of benzyl alcohol;


from 0 to 99.8% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 99% by weight,] of component (a); [and]

from 0 to 25% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 10% by weight,] of component (b); and


from 0 to 70% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 30% by weight,] of component (c).

18. (Amended) The method according to claim 17, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises from 0.001 to 25% by

weight of further lipophilic GRAS flavoring agents [(d) to (i), preferably from 0.001 to 25% by weight, more preferably from 0.01 to 9% by weight, of said further GRAS flavoring agents [(d) to (i)] selected from the group consisting of phenols or their derivatives, esters, terpenes, acetals, aldehydes and essential oils or extracts thereof.

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19. (Amended) The method according to claim 18, wherein said further lipophilic GRAS flavoring agents are phenols [(d)] and/or essential oils [(i)] or extracts thereof having a high content of alcohols, aldehydes, phenols, acetates or esters.
20. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 1 [to 19], wherein said antimicrobial composition does not contain any derivatives of the GRAS flavoring agents.
21. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 15 to 20] 17, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises one or two lipophilic GRAS flavor alcohols [(a₁)] and at least one polyphenol compound [(b)].
22. (Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein said polyphenol compound [(b)] is tannin.

24. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 1 [to 23], wherein said antimicrobial composition further [contains] comprises monohydric or polyhydric alcohols having from 2 to 10 carbon atoms, and additives selected from the group consisting of emulsifiers, stabilizers, antioxidants, preservatives, solvents and[/or] carriers.
25. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 1 [to 23], wherein said antimicrobial composition [exclusively] consists of GRAS flavoring agents.
26. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 1 [to 25], wherein said [distribution or application] step of applying [comprises application of] said antimicrobial composition to the surface of the plants[, especially] is carried out by spraying, immersion or nebulizing.
27. (Amended) A method for protecting plants from microbial attack shortly before or after the harvest, comprising the distribution of said antimicrobial composition within the plant[, which is effected] by the step of adding the antimicrobial composition to nutrient media, nutrient liquids and/or water, said antimicrobial composition [containing] comprising at least two GRAS (generally recognized as safe) flavoring agents.

28. (Amended) The method according to claim 27, wherein said GRAS flavoring agents are selected from the group consisting of (a) GRAS flavor alcohols or their derivatives, (b) polyphenol compounds, (c) GRAS flavor acids or their derivatives, (d) phenols or their derivatives, (e) esters, (f) terpenes, (g) acetals, (h) aldehydes and (i) essential oils.
29. (Amended) The method according to claim 27 [or 28], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises at least one GRAS flavor alcohol [(a), preferably an aromatic GRAS flavor alcohol, especially benzyl alcohol].
-  30. (Amended) The method according to claim 29, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises less than 50% by weight[, preferably less than 30% by weight, more preferably less than 20% by weight,] of an alcohol selected from the group consisting of ethanol, isopropanol or benzyl alcohol or a mixture of these [substances] alcohols.
31. (Amended) The method according to claim 27 [or 28], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises at least one hydrophilic alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent and/or one hydrophilic non-alcoholic GRAS flavoring agent.

32. (Amended) The method according to claim 31, wherein said antimicrobial composition further [contains] comprises benzyl alcohol and/or a polyphenol compound [(b)].
33. (Amended) The method according to claim 27 [or 28], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:
- (A) at least one [or more] GRAS flavor alcohol[s] (a) and/or [their] its derivative[s]; and
- (B) at least one [or more] flavoring agent[s] selected from the group consisting of (b) polyphenol compounds[;] and (c) GRAS flavor acids or their derivatives.
34. (Amended) The method according to claim 33, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:
- from 0.1 to 99% by weight[, preferably from 0.5 to 99% by weight,] of [component (a),] GRAS flavor alcohol;
- from 0 to 25% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 10% by weight,] of polyphenol compounds; [component (b),] and
- from 0 to 70% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 30% by weight,] of [component (c)] GRAS flavor acids or their derivatives.
35. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 27 [to 34], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises benzyl alcohol and at least one further GRAS flavoring agent.

37. (Amended) The method according to claim 36, wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises less than 50% by weight[, preferably less than 30% by weight, more preferably less than 20% by weight,] of benzyl alcohol or of a mixture of benzyl alcohol with ethanol and/or isopropanol.

38. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 33 [to 36], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:

[(a1)] benzyl alcohol as a necessary component; [and optionally

(a2)] at least one [or more further] other GRAS flavor alcohol[s] and/ or their derivatives; [and]

[(b)] at least one [or more] polyphenol compound[s]; and/or

[(c)] at least one [or more] GRAS acid[s] and/ or their derivatives.

39. (Amended) The method according to claim 38, wherein said further GRAS flavor alcohol [(a2)] is selected from the group consisting of: acetoin, ethyl alcohol, propyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, propylene glycol, glycerol, n-butyl alcohol, iso-butyl alcohol, hexyl alcohol, L-menthol, octyl alcohol, cinnamyl alcohol, α -methylbenzyl alcohol, heptyl alcohol, n-amyl alcohol, iso-amyl alcohol, anisalcohol, citronellol, n-decyl alcohol, geraniol, β , γ -hexenol, lauryl alcohol, linalool, nerolidol, nonadienol, nonyl alcohol, rhodinol, terpineol, borneol, clineol, anisole, cuminyl alcohol, 10-un-decene-1-ol, 1-hexadecanol or their derivatives;

said polyphenol compound [(b)] is selected from the group consisting of:

catechol, resorcinol, hydroquinone, phloroglucinol, pyrogallol, cyclohexane, resveratrol, usnic acid, acylpolyphenols, lignins, anthocyanins, flavones, catechols, gallic acid derivatives, caffeic acid, flavonoids, derivatives of the mentioned polyphenols, and extracts from Camellia, Primula; and

said GRAS acid [(c)] is selected from the group consisting of:

acetic acid, aconitic acid, adipic acid, formic acid, malic acid, capronic acid, hydrocinnamic acid, pelargonic acid, lactic acid, phenoxyacetic acid, phenylacetic acid, valeric acid, iso-valeric acid, cinnamic acid, citric acid, mandelic acid, tartaric acid, fumaric acid, tannic acid and their derivatives.

40. (Amended) The method according to claim 38 [or 39], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises:

from 0.1 to 99% by weight[, preferably from 0.1 to 75% by weight,] of benzyl alcohol;

from 0 to 99.8% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 99% by weight,] of other GRAS flavor alcohols and/or their derivatives [component (a2)];

[and]

from 0 to 25% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 10% by weight,] of polyphenol compounds [component (b)]; and from 0 to 70% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 30% by weight,] of [component (c)] GRAS acids and/or their derivatives.

41. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 38 [to 40], wherein said antimicrobial composition [contains] comprises further GRAS flavoring agents selected from the group consisting of [(d)] phenols, [(e)] esters, [(f)] terpenes, [(g)] acetals, [(h)] aldehydes and [(i)] essential oils.

A2 42. (Amended) The method according to claim 41, wherein said antimicrobial composition contains from 0.001 to 25% by weight[, preferably from 0.01 to 9% by weight,] of said further GRAS flavoring agents [(d) to (i)].

43. (Amended) The method according to claim [41 or] 42, wherein said further GRAS flavoring agents are phenols [(d)] and/or essential oils [(i)].

44. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 27 [to 43], wherein said antimicrobial composition does not contain any derivatives of the GRAS flavoring agents.

45. (Amended) The method according to [one or more of] claim[s] 38 [to 44], wherein said antimicrobial composition contains one or two GRAS flavor alcohols [(a2)] and at least one polyphenol compound [(b)].
46. (Amended) The method according to claim 45, wherein said polyphenol compound [(b)] is tannin.
48. (Amended) The method according to claim 27, wherein said antimicrobial composition is the composition of [defined as in claims 1 to 25, especially as in] claim[s] 12 [to 25].
- A2 49. (Amended) A method for protecting plants shortly before or after the harvest from insects and insect larvae, comprising the steps of:
- (i) [the distribution or application of] applying an insecticidal composition to the surface of the plants and/or
- (ii) [the distribution of] distributing an insecticidal composition within the plant by adding the insecticidal composition to nutrient media, nutrient liquids and/or water; wherein said insecticidal composition is a composition containing GRAS flavoring agents as defined in claim[s] 1 [to 25 and 27 to 48].